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ABSTRACT

This pilot study attempted to develop systematic scientific procedures for the study of improvisational drama with children, especially ways of assessing what the typical creative drama teacher does with children, what children do when they are acting, and what effects this might have on the rest of their educational development. Specific investigations undertaken were (1) development of methods for correlating child activity in dramatic tasks with involvement scale ratings and to correlate these ratings with audio tapes of the activities; (2) an analysis of the major events in improvisational drama; (3) development of a role involvement scale; (4) development of reliability in the use of the involvement scale; (5) development of ways of describing the relationship between the child's natural management of his own postures and gestures and the requirements of the role; (6) an examination through video tape of the way in which children of varying ages react to the same instructions and script; (7) relationships between dramatic, artistic, and fantasy measures of expression. (Analyses of data from a number of the studies cited are, at this time, incomplete.) (LH)

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Final Report

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Assessment of Role Induction and Role Involvement in Creative Drama

Principal Investigators
Professors Gilbert N. Lazier and Brian Sutton-Smith
Teachers College, Columbia University
525 W. 120th St.
New York, N.Y. 10027 [1]

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[1]Professor Paul Kozelka was administrative project director.

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Summary

The present project was a pilot attempt to develop systematic scientific procedures for the study of improvisational drama with children. The foci were on ways of assessing what the typical creative drama teacher does with children, what children do when they are acting, and what effects this might have on the rest of their educational development. We consider that in this first year we have made considerable progress in developing ways of systematically studying the children while they are acting. We have also made some preliminary steps in understanding teacher effects and dramatic outcomes. Perhaps more importantly, we have developed a tentative theory of the development of the imaginative life which has arisen from our joint interests in play as well as drama. At the same time, we have been able to establish a working practical relationship between our students in art and in psychology overcoming initial barriers in groups. At the time of writing this report, there are numerous further studies in progress.

Problems Under Consideration

The central practical quest is to understand what dramatic training may contribute to education. Prior to any such understanding, however, it is necessary to develop ways of talking systematically about dramatic behavior itself. It is necessary to know the steps through which a child proceeds in the development of competence in drama improvisation. What is required in this area as in other areas of human development is a scale which can state the progressive stages through which a child proceeds in the development of dramatic mastery. Once such a scale has been provided, it then becomes possible to talk about the types of teacher training that advance children more rapidly along the points on this scale. In turn, it becomes possible to see what effects such movement has on the rest of the curriculum. In this project, two major attempts have been made to develop ways of systematically assessing children's progress in drama. The first focussed on a measure of role involvement. Our conceptions in that area have been dealt with in earlier reports, and they are summarized in an article "Psychology and Drama" which is included in Appendix A (and submitted to ETJ for publication). In the present report we add some further information on the reliabilities of this measure and its correlation with other devices. The major focus of this report, however, will be on the more recent methods of assessment made possible by the use of video techniques.

While the article "Psychology and Drama" reveals some of the interdisciplinary excitement and conceptions generated by this project, it was only a first step in focussing on ways of talking about the role of play and drama in child development. We have proceeded beyond that article to an attempt to state our intuitive and practical convictions as to the role that these expressive phenomena play in child growth. We feel that it is important to provide this material here; otherwise the research foci appear to be suspended in thin air and do not take on the meaning that they can when seen in the context of our broader approach. Briefly we hold that the child proceeds through three major stages in the development of his imaginative life. He learns to pretend, to share pretence with others, and

to develop systematic rule systems for such pretence. Each of these imaginative steps provides a vital underpinning for conceptual activities. Not to be able to pretend is not to be able to symbolize which is not to be able to read or to do arithmetic. Again, not to be able to share pretence with others forestalls the discussion of literature or science. Not to be able to generate imaginative games forestalls the development of abstract intelligence. These are our presuppositions and we have set them forth in the book, Your Child the Actor. In that work we have attempted to provide the parent and teacher with the activities which contribute to the development of the child's imaginative life and, indirectly therefore, to his mastery of symbolic realms. The introduction to the book, the first chapter, and subsequent chapter outlines are contained in Appendix B. We trust that by including this work we will make somewhat more concrete the significance of the research programs discussed below.

Methods

The two research assistants supported by this project have been used primarily to run an improvisational drama program with volunteer subjects from the Agnes Russell School at Teachers College, Columbia University. The children met in seven groups of from five to ten children four afternoons a week after school hours. The meeting place is a studio room equipped with one-way mirror observation booths as well as a sound and video equipment one-way booth. Problems in installing the two video cameras (a large wide-angle fixed lens and a small manually operable zoom-focus lens) delayed the commencement of the video procedures until after the official termination date. Because of the importance of these procedures to the total project, however, we have included them in the present report. The funding in this grant, therefore, was centered chiefly on the two research assistants and the video equipment. There were in addition two other theatre students and four psychology students who worked as volunteers in the program. Two further psychology students received funding from other sources.

The first six months of the program were devoted to intensive work in developing a method of rating dramatic involvement as well as systematically describing the programs of the teachers. Measures were also taken of the children's drawing capacities as well as their dramatic involvement. During the second six months in an attempt to further our sensitivity not only to the involvement variables, but also to the ways in which idiosyncratic characteristics of the children improved or interfered with their performance, we developed extensive observational protocol of each of the children using Barker and Wright methods of ecological recording. On the programmatic side, there were continuing discussions of the essential materials in improvisational drama (Spolin, Ward, Siks, Burger, and others) and an attempt to develop a schema of progressions within that material. The results of our deliberations on programs are reflected in this report in the script material used as a basis for the video collections of data. During the Spring of 1970 the acquisition of the video equipment permitted a much more systematic recording of children's responses, though we might add that it had really taken almost the whole previous year to develop sufficient flexibility in our conjoined notions (theatricians and psychologists) to permit this type of experimentation to be acceptable to both groups. Throughout the total period, the psychologists, in particular, have developed a number of research foci which

though peripheral to our major intent, show considerable promise of contributing further to our understanding of children's development through drama. The drama students have become increasingly sensitive to training issues.

The studies below are divided into three groups: those having to do with (A) teaching, (B) with child development in drama, and (C) with the interrelationships of drama with other forms of development.

Results

A. The Teaching of Creative Drama.

Study one. Analysis of program. -- One paramount factor underlying all research attempts associated with this project was the method of correlating specific dramatic behavior with our involvement scale. This problem, although obvious in all empirical research in the social sciences, has not been approached adequately in the previous study of affective phenomena. More directly stated, once we agreed upon certain salient dimensions for our instrument, to what could we apply the measure? The obvious answer is children involved in dramatic activity, but which child involved in which activity under which circumstances at what time? An efficient manner of correlating ratings with behavior under a variety of recorded circumstances had to be devised.

In order to begin to cope with this problem, the drama session had to be subdivided into modules which could be related to an external constant such as specific time-samples. This problem was even more complicated in that in the beginning we did not wish to tamper in any way with the usual behavior of the drama sessions. Thus our structural subdivisions had to be implicit within the structure of the natural phenomenon observed. After considerable experimentation, we selected the following procedure. The drama session was analyzed structurally by one research assistant whose sole function was to divide each session into "events" and to affix a qualitative label to each event for the purposes of later identification. Each event represented a dramatic task which the teacher presented to the subjects, such as rolling an imaginary stone up a hill or pantomiming finding a billfold in the street. These events increased in complexity as the session and the term progressed. The subjects undertook each task singly or in groups, depending on the pedagogical purpose of the exercise. Each session might consist of five or six of these events, some of which were repeated after group discussion. Fig. 1.

The aforementioned drama assistant would watch the session through the one-way glass and call off the beginning of each event, assign a code number to said event, announce his descriptive label of this event, and finally state the time. All other researchers working with our involvement scales would number their scale sheets accordingly, also indicating which child they were observing. Two other researchers were concerned with the induction devices presented, in other words, the techniques which the teacher employed to elicit appropriate behavior from each child. These researchers also coded their descriptions of the induction techniques using the same system as the others.

Figure 1
Analysis Sheet For Drama Sessions

Date: Dec. 17, 1969
Group: Wed.
Time: 3:30 - 4:15

Activity No. and Time	Activity Description	Leader Techniques	Additional Notes
#1 3:30-3:45	Listening to story of <u>The Nutcracker Suite</u>	tells story using a great deal of gesture and dislogue. Asks which scene they'd like to work on.	
#2 3:46-3:50	Stew scene	sets up plays a rat	
#3 3:51-4:04	Scene in which King tastes stew	asks if all is clear before starting. plays herald interacts with others plays King when David had to leave explains to student who interrupts that his scene is next and that he can't interrupt this scene.	to keep scene going
#4 4:05	change from people to nutcrackers		

Activity No. and Time	Activity Description	Leader Techniques	Additional Notes
4:06		asks what would happen gives verbal signal evaluates	
#5 4:07-4:09	Start story from beginning	casts according to their requests plays one of mice stops scene and asks them to imagine	Tris laughs
4:10	Start again		Tris and Patti laugh
4:11		Scene stops. He pulls out what was believable. Asks if they would laugh in front of King, when he has so much power	
4:11-4:13	Scene continues		
4:13-4:15		evaluates. Asks them to make parts as real as possible without hurting what someone else does. Urge them to keep going, not to stop and direct. "Call, 'Guard.' Whoever is free will go. That way scene can go on and it's more fun."	

Through such coding, accurate cross-correlations of specific data could be made. This procedure enables us to rate any specific child on our involvement scale according to a specific task, with specific induction procedures employed, at a specific time in the specific session. It further permitted us to plot the involvement scale evaluations sequentially per child across any one session and to correlate these evaluations with the running audio tapes of that session.

One other advantage to this system involves the variety of data collection options permitted. For example, it was possible for us to have all researchers evaluate the same child. Using the same procedure, our assistants could just as easily each be assigned to a different child per event.

Regardless of the significance of the data collected using this procedure in our present work, we hope that this system and its eventual refinements might act as paradigms for more systematic research designs in relation to the drama, art in general, and the affective domain.

Study two. Analysis of major elements in improvisational drama. -- The concern here was to develop an adequate sample of the types of behaviors characteristically presented to children in improvisational drama within a hierarchy of difficulty usually administered by drama teachers. Texts utilized popularly in creative dramatics classes (Siks, Ward, Burger, Spolin, et al.) suggest an inductive progression leading from simple improvisational tasks to those more and more complex, ending in full story dramatization. We felt that a beginning step, sometimes referred to as "sense impression" exercises necessitates the visualization, reaction, and use of simple imaginary objects. From this step, imaginary objects are placed within a larger imaginary environment. Then other characters within such an illusory environment are added. Interaction between these characters next occurs. Then demands upon participants to portray characters other than themselves are made. Conflict is then introduced in planting goals and oppositions to such goals. Finally plotting is indicated by presenting a preconceived sequence of mandatory events programmed into an improvisational situation with room still provided for spontaneous details. This model was used as the basis for the spectrum of behaviors presented to children in usual creative dramatic situations.

The scenario listed below deals with the first three steps in the paradigm of dramatic tasks just explained: (1) reaction to an imaginary object, (2) reaction to this object in environmental contexts, and (3) reaction to the object within an environment which necessitates interaction with another character:

EXERCISE NO. 1 - The Child and a simple imaginary object: a wallet.

LEADER: (Child's first name), I'd like you to imagine something for me, if you will. Right here where my fingers are touching the floor, I want you to suddenly find a large brown wallet. Now, the wallet has twenty one-dollar bills in it. I'd like you to do three things with it, (Child's name repeated); first of all, find it . . . do whatever you think you might do with it

if you really found a wallet. Your cue to begin is when I sit down. Do you understand everything?

CHILD: (He responds as he may.)

THE LEADER SITS ON THE FLOOR IN AN OBSCURE CORNER OF THE ROOM, ONE WHICH GENERALLY ENCOURAGES THE CHILD TO FACE THE VIDEO CAMERAS.

ACTIVITY SEQUENCE:

1. The Child finds the wallet.
2. The Child picks up the wallet.
3. The Child interacts with wallet.

EXERCISE NO. 2 - The Child, the object and an environment: a city park.

LEADER: Thank you, (Child's name). No, I'd like to add something . . . and that is a place for you to be when you find the wallet. I'd like you to imagine that this room is a city park. All right? Over here . . .

THE LEADER GESTURES TOWARD AN AREA LEFT OF THE CHILD IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE CAMERAS.

. . . is a sandbox. Along here . . .

THE LEADER INDICATES THE WALL FACING THE CAMERAS.

. . . you can see some swings. The wallet is still lying where you found it before. I'd like you to find the wallet . . . pick it up . . . and do something with it. But this time you can play in the park awhile before you find it. All right? Now is everything clear to you?

CHILD: (He responds as he may.)

LEADER: Wait until I sit down and then begin . . .

THE LEADER TAKES HIS FORMER SEATED POSITION IN THE CORNER.

ACTIVITY SEQUENCE:

1. The Child plays in the park.
2. The Child finds the wallet.
3. The Child picks up the wallet.
4. The Child interacts with the wallet.

EXERCISE NO. 3 - The Child, the object, an environment and an additional character: a Policeman.

LEADER: Thank you, (Child's name). This time I'm going to add something else. In the park where you find the wallet

there is another person . . . a Policeman. And I'm going to be the Policeman. The scene is just as it was and you can begin as you did before: play in the park, find the wallet and pick it up. I'll be over here . . .

THE LEADER GESTURES TOWARD AN AREA BEHIND A PILLAR WHERE HE CAN BE CONCEALED FROM THE CHILD INITIALLY.

. . . behind some trees. You don't see the Policeman until he sees you. All right? Is there anything this time that you don't understand?

CHILD: (He responds as he may.)

LEADER: You had better wait to begin until I am behind the trees. All ready?

CHILD: (He responds as he may.)

THE LEADER MOVES BEHIND THE PILLAR AND THE CHILD BEGINS THE ACTIVITY SEQUENCE.

ACTIVITY SEQUENCE:

1. The Child plays in the park.
2. The Child finds the wallet.
3. The Child picks up the wallet.

AS THE CHILD PICKS UP THE WALLET, THE LEADER AS POLICEMAN ENTERS THE ACTING AREA "CATCHING" THE CHILD WITH THE WALLET IN HIS HANDS.

LEADER: (Policeman) What y'got there, kid?

CHILD: . . . A wallet . . .

THE CHILD IS MOST LIKELY TO ANSWER THE ABOVE, BUT HE MIGHT POSSIBLY SAY "NOTHING" OR PUT THE WALLET BEHIND HIS BACK, ETC.

LEADER: (Policeman) How'd you get it?

CHILD: I found it . . .

THE CHILD MIGHT COMPLETE THE IMAGE AND ADD: " . . . ON THE GROUND." IF HE DOES NOT, THE POLICEMAN WOULD ADD THE FOLLOWING:

LEADER: (Policeman) Where did you find it?

CHILD: On the ground . . .

IT IS POSSIBLE THAT WITH ANY OF THESE ANSWERS THE CHILD MIGHT NOT RESPOND READILY OR MIGHT EVADE THE TRUTH. IN SUCH CASES, THE POLICEMAN WOULD REPEAT HIS QUESTION PRECEDED BY "C'MON, KID, C'MON! TELL ME THE TRUTH!"

LEADER: (Policeman) Do you expect me to believe that?

CHILD: Yes . . .

HE MIGHT SAY "SURE" OR "OF COURSE," ETC.

LEADER: (Policeman) Why should I believe you, kid? Give me a good reason why I should believe you!

CHILD: (Some justification or evasion.)

LEADER: (Policeman) . . . O.K. Hand it over! (If the Child hesitates) C'mon . . . c'mon! You heard me. Hand it over!

THE CHILD MAY OFFER RESISTANCE OR NOT. WHEN THE ACTION OF HANDING THE WALLET TO THE POLICEMAN IS COMPLETED, THE POLICEMAN ATTEMPTS TO TAKE THE CHILD'S HAND.

LEADER: (Policeman) O.K. C'mon! You're coming with me.

THERE MAY BE A REACTION HERE AGAINST TAKING THE POLICEMAN'S HAND. THE POLICEMAN SHOULD NOT IMMEDIATELY INDICATE HIS PURPOSE.

LEADER: (Policeman) You're coming with me to the Station to see if this wallet's been reported.

THERE MAY BE FURTHER RESISTANCE HERE.

LEADER: (Policeman) C'mon . . . C'mon . . . Don't give me any trouble, kid!

AS THE POLICEMAN AND THE CHILD LEAVE THE ACTING AREA, THE SEQUENCE IS COMPLETED.

In research now underway, we are continuing the hierarchial analysis exemplified by the preceding scenario.

B. The Systematic Description of the Children's Behavior During Improvisation.

Study three. Development of the role involvement scale. -- See Appendix A.

Study four. Development of reliability in the use of the involvement scale. -- Each of five raters made a global rating of each child on each dimension of the nine dimension scale. Each rater had observed each child at least once per week over a period of three months, and considerable time had been spent in discussion of the dimensions as well as in testing reliabilities at particular sessions. These global ratings were done independently after the year's dramatic activities had been completed. The following tables indicate that the five raters agreed perfectly on most dimensions with each of the three drama groups over 50% of the time, and agreed within one point on the scale over 80% of the time. These are acceptable levels of agreement on a seven point scale, and indicate that the dimensions as outlined in the accompanying report ("Psychology and Drama") are meaningful dimensions for use in observing dramatic involvement.

Figure 2

Percentages of Agreement on the Dimensions of the Dramatic Involvement Scale

Group 1 (N = 8)

Scale point differences between raters	Dimensions of Scale									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	58	50	53	50	50	39	65	58	47	57
1	21	20	30	30	28	30	21	21	30	32
2	11	20	3	10	16	27	14	14	17	3
3	10	7	14	4	6	4	--	7	3	6
4	--	3	--	3	--	--	--	--	--	3
5	--	--	--	3	--	--	--	--	3	--

Group 2 (N = 2)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	67	67	67	54	69	50	54	46	50	59
1	17	14	29	37	21	37	28	37	33	29
2	12	14	4	5	9	13	18	8	13	4
3	4	5	--	4	--	--	--	5	4	4
4	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	4	--	4
5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

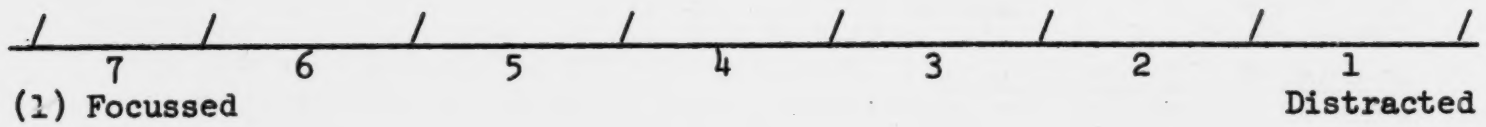
Group 3 (N = 11)

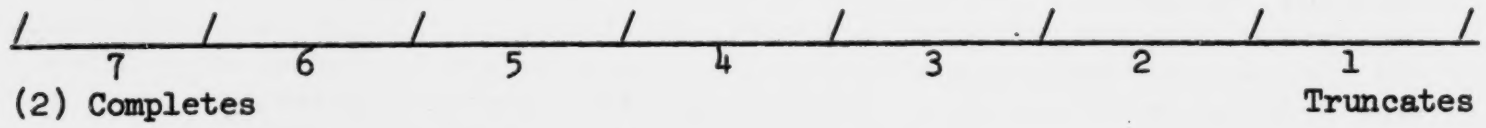
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	60	55	54	54	54	44	48	54	58	61
1	28	28	25	23	31	28	18	25	15	20
2	10	14	14	12	9	16	24	13	18	12
3	2	--	7	3	6	8	5	4	9	--
4	--	3	--	6	--	4	5	4	--	4
5	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	--	3

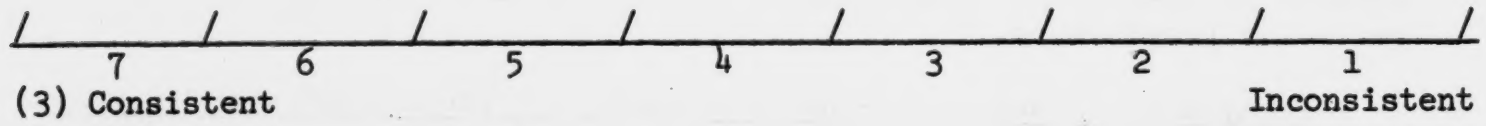
Figure 3
Scale of Involvement

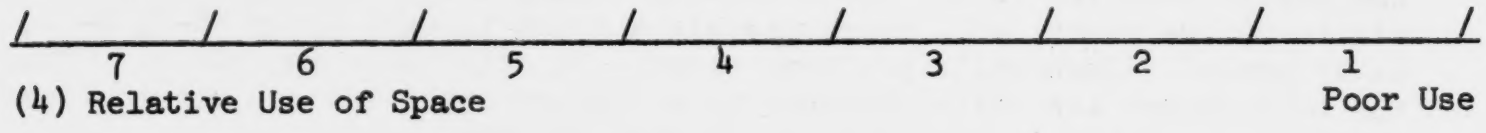
NAME OF CHILD: _____ DATE: _____

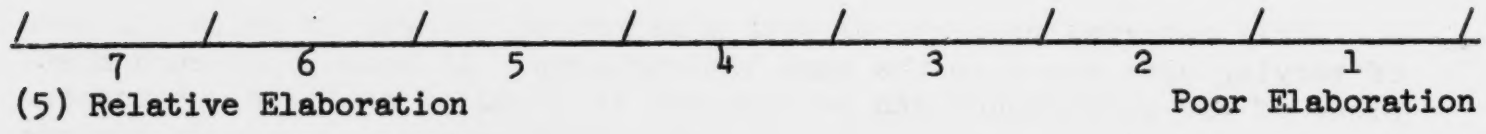
OBSERVER: _____ TIME: _____ GROUP: _____

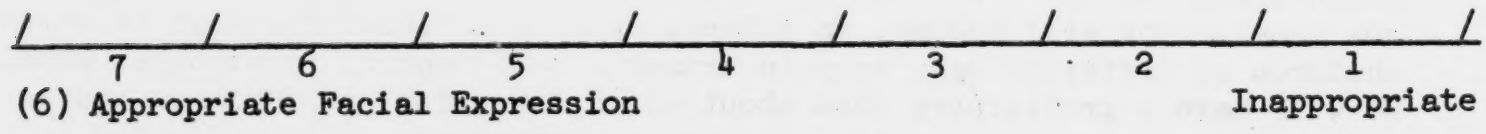


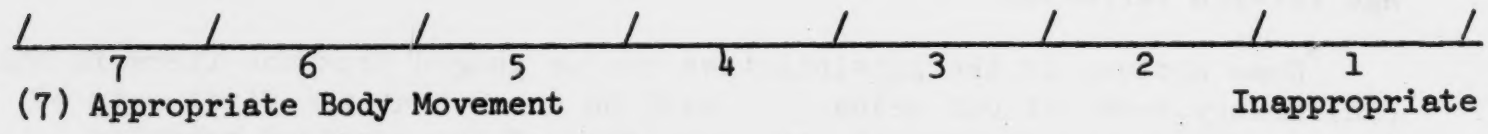


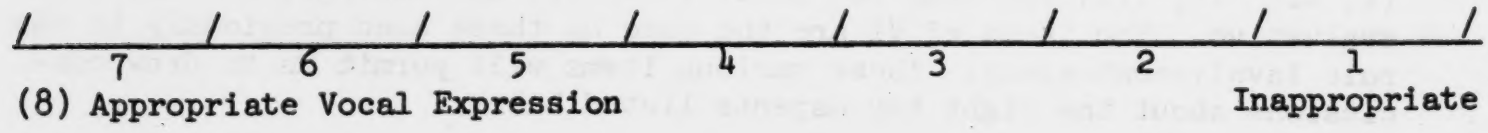


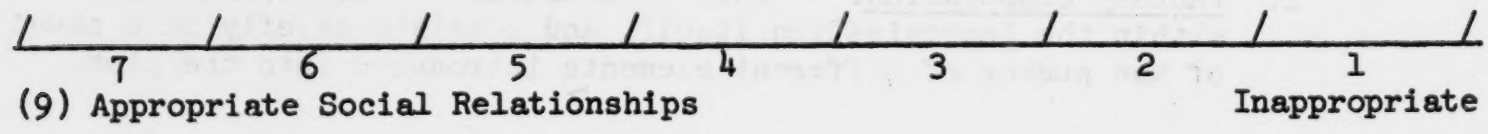












It is clear from these results (Figure 2), as we might expect, that agreement was easier to obtain in the smaller Group 2, than in the two other larger groups. The first dimension seemed to be the easiest to judge, perhaps because it has more to do with getting into the drama, than with the quality of involvement once the pretence has been accepted. Facial expression was the least reliable judgement for all three groups.

Study five. Naturalistic recordings of involvement variables and idiosyncratic variables. -- The methods were those described by Barker, P.G. and Wright, H.F. in Midwest and Its Children (1955) and used by Gump and Sutton-Smith in "Activity Settings and Social Interaction," (American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1955, 25, 755-760). The concern was with ways of describing the interaction, say, between the constrictedness natural to a child's management of his own posture and gesture, and the spatial deployments and movements required by the dramatic role. These materials have not yet been analyzed, and have, in a sense, been superceded by the much superior protocol subsequently provided by the video studies. The problem, however, still remains, and this protocol serves to provide us with a data sample on the same children taken at an earlier stage in the present program. The video samples are being taken towards the end of the period of programming.

Study six. Video recording of a sample of improvisational behavior. -- We have just completed the video recording of 46 children being put through the script detailed in the above section (Study two). The ages range from six to twelve years, with approximately a third in each group (6-7, 8-10, 11-12 years). Each child performs alone. No child sees any other. After the performance the child proceeds to a further interview and viewing session which is described in the section (C) that follows.

This material presents us with a record of the way in which children of varying ages react to the same instructions. It means that each minute piece of the performance can be compared in terms of age level responses. We are currently in the process of coding this behavior as a step towards quantifying the age differences. Given the limited nature of the sample, our conclusions will become, in effect, hypotheses about the ways in which children of different ages vary in dramatic competences, among other studies. We will have a preliminary idea about which aspects of performance change with age development and which aspects of performance seem unaffected by age related variables.

Some notions of the possibilities can be gauged from the items in the preliminary code set out below. It will be noted that the first sets of items refer fairly strictly to the specifics of the required behavior (I, II, III, IV); but that the later items (V) are interpretive and (VI) evaluative. The items of VI are the same as those used previously in the role involvement scale. These various items will permit us to draw conclusions about the eight key aspects listed below:

1. Fantasy elaboration. -- This is a measure of differentiation within the improvisation itself, and consists chiefly in a count of the number of different elements introduced into the plot.

2. Organization. -- This involves the relatedness within and across the segments, particularly, whether there is a cumulative extension of action in each succeeding sequence with the earlier sequence providing a base for more elaborate action subsequently. The younger children tend to give brief and concrete endings; the middle children (7-8 years) tend to wander on in a picaresque way; and the oldest children tend (12 years) to give a more organized and coherently segmented enactment.

   We are looking at the question of organization in terms of related material in the psychological literature on the organization of classificatory activities and perceptual activities (Piaget and Werner).

3. Sense of environment. -- Some of the children quickly fill their enacted space with telephones, doors, shops, and schoolrooms; others carry on their acts in a stripped-down space. It is possible to score for this type of elaboration.

4. Bodily involvement. -- Very few children use their whole body. This is the exception. Some act from the elbow down; others substitute words (the olders in particular); some are very dramatic but only with parts of their body.

5. Plotting. -- This is the cognitive elaboration of the improvisation and is sometimes clearly thought through while the quality of the acting is quite inferior.

6. Action details. -- The largest coding is applied directly to the acts in the improvisation described in the scenario, and has to do with finding the wallet, disposing of the wallet or money, playing in the sandpit and on the swings, and interacting with the policeman.

7. Dependence and defiance in interaction with authority figure. -- There are various types of each of these; some clearly characterized; some involving non dramatized response systems. For the younger children, much of the acquiesence involves dropping right out of role.

8. Improvisational styles. -- Some children stop and consider before each act; others move kinetically and immediately to action; some mimic and reinforce the leader from the beginning; others remain motionless; yet others contrive plot into each small sequence coming on the wallet with surprise or contrived inadvertance; some have to check out each step with the leader; others verbally create the scenario like stage directors as they proceed. There are differences in tempo and termination.

Draft of category system for analysis of video dramatizations. -- The aim of the system is to state a form of behavior in such a way as to let the video-viewer check its presence or absence. He can replay the video until certain. The following categories apply to the children's improvisations March 16th - 26th, 1970, based on the scenario "Role Involvement Control Experiment":

I. THE PRELUDE. When the Subject enters the studio and the Teacher begins explaining the script, the Subject:

CHECK

1. matches his action to that of the T (stands, sits as T does).

2. verbally reinforces the T -- says "mm" "mm" etc.

3. watches the T most of the time.

4. looks away from T most of the time (on ground, etc.).

5. follows T gestures with his eyes to imaged objects.

6. score number of times S looks in direction of camera.

7. score number of times S shifts position or moves - molar:

8. score number of times S shifts position or moves - molecular:

9. score number of questions asking permission to do something.

10. score questions asking about the dramatization which presuppose an acceptance of the images.

11. number of verbal embellishments of projected drama.

12. asks whether can use words.

13. time elapsed between end of T instructions and beginning of S enactment.

14. during time elapse - S ponders.

15. during time elapse - S warms up physically.

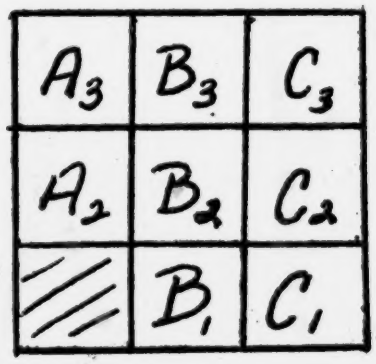
16. during time elapse - S looks about as if setting the scene.

II. FIRST SCENE.

A. Finding Wallet

1. Where does S deploy himself?

B 1 is where Jim sits. B 2 is where wallet is found. Draw a line following S pathways putting dots at spots where he stops.



2. Where does act begin? Mark with X on graph.

3. Goes to edge of room and starts.

4. Faces away from wallet spot and starts.

5. Begins at focal point facing wallet.

6. Creates act prior to discovery of wallet.

7. Is wallet sighted before it is picked up?

8. Does this appear spontaneous?

9. Is there an act of picking up?

10. Does the imaginary object seem tangible?

11. Do the hands make contact, clutch, express the object?

12. Is the wallet opened?

13. Is the money extracted?

14. Is the money counted? several?

15. 1-20.

16. Is there detailed examination of wallet?

17. Are wallet and money separated?

18. Are there observations (verbal) on contents?

19. Does act include a reaction to larger environment?

20. . . . to interior environment?

21. Both?

B. Disposing of Wallet

1. Looks about.
2. Furtively, searchingly, suggesting implications.
3. Hides money, keeps wallet.
4. Replaces money, keeps wallet.
5. Runs away with wallet.
6. Telephones someone.
7. Tells someone.
8. Creates complex environment, doors, people, etc.
9. How many such separate features?

C. Ending the Scene

1. Walks off in character.
2. Freezes (until T questions).
3. Physical finish (smiles).
4. Verbal finish (I'm done).
5. Both.
6. Deployment.

III. SECOND SCENE

A. Wallet in Playground

Repeat all materials for first scene (prelude, finding, disposing, and ending).

B. Play in Sandpit

1. Plays in sandpit.
2. Steps or jumps over wall.
3. Shapes sand with hands.
4. Digs.
5. Destroys, hits, or jumps on.
6. Brushes sand off clothes or out of shoes.

7. Buries wallet in sand.

8. Adjusts clothes for playing (pulls up sleeves).

9. Sweeps with hands.

10. Kneels for play.

11. Draws with finger in sand.

12. Smoothes with hands.

13. Throws sand in air.

14. Fills pail or empties it.

C. Play on Swings

1. Shows reluctance to play on swings.

2. Plays on swings.

3. Takes hold of ropes.

4. Climbs on swings.

5. Jumps off swing.

6. Swings both legs and arms.

7. Minor movements.

8. Vigorous rhythmic movements.

9. Adds noise of swinging.

D. Introduces New Types of Play

1. Baseball.

2. Hopscotch.

3. Other.

IV. <u>WALLET, ENVIRONMENT AND POLICEMAN</u>

(As before [I] and prelude; [II] finding, disposing, ending; [III] sandpit, swings, novel.)

A. Policeman

1. What have you got there kid: says nothing.
2. What have you got there kid: says wallet.
3. Is prior activity sustained so T must intrude?
4. Is S anticipating arrival of T?
5. Do verbalizations depart from script expected responses?
6. Number of elaborations of answers.
7. Number of questions directed back to T.
8. Latency of responses (seconds).
9. How did you get it? . . . I found it.
10. How did you get it? . . . other . . .
11. Where did you find it? There, or on the ground.
12. Where did you find it? Other . . .
13. Do you expect me to believe that? . . . Yes.
14. Do you expect me to believe that? . . . Other.
15. Why should I believe you? . . . gives reason.
16. Why should I believe you? . . . gives defiance.
17. Why should I believe you? . . . says nothing.
18. Hand it over. . . .acquiesces
19. Hand it over . . . is defiant.
20. Hand it over . . . argues.
21. Hand it over . . . tries to deceive.
22. Come with me . . . acquiesces.
23. Come with me . . . backs away.
24. Come with me . . . walks away.
25. Come with me . . . runs away.
26. Come with me . . . looks doubtful.

V. INTERPRETIVE CATEGORIES

Sound Accompaniments	Scene 1	2	3	All
1. Is there verbalization?				
2. Number of utterances.				
3. Number directed to another person.				
4. Number directed to the teacher.				
5. Number not directed to another.				
6. Exclamations.				
7. Sound effects illustrating action.				
8. Verbal accompaniments of action.				
9. Verbal elaborations.				

Plot Elaborations

1. Number of plot elaborations.
2. Number of incongruous elaborations.

Mannerisms

1. Body shaking.
2. Hair stroking.
3. Swaggering.
4. Relaxed appearance.
5. Constricted appearance.
6. Graceful movement.
7. Humor.

Continuity

1. Do 2nd and 3rd scenes contain elements of the preceding?

2. Are scenes quite distinct?

3. Is there a cumulative development?

4. Is there repetition?

IV. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Base Judgment on a Comparison Within This Subject Group

	Above Average	Average	Below Average
1. focussed-distractible			
scene 1			
2			
3			
2. completed-truncated			
1			
2			
3			
3. consistent-inconsistent			
1			
2			
3			
4. good space useage-poor			
1			
2			
3			
5. high elaboration-poor			
1			
2			
3			
6. appropriate facial expression			
1			
2			
3			
7. appropriate body movements			
1			
2			
3			
8. vocal expression			
1			
2			
3			

	Above Average	Average	Below Average
9. interaction			
1			
2			
3			

C. Interrelationships Between Dramatic Improvisations and Other Forms of Development.

Study seven. Relationships between dramatic, artistic, and fantasy measures of expression. -- In a pilot study in the Spring of 1969, the children were ranked in order of their global ratings on the involvement scale and in terms of their skill in drawing a man and a woman. The drawings were rated for aesthetic quality by two separate judges with over 90% agreement. Rank order correlations between dramatic involvement and ranked quality of drawings yielded a positive and significant relationship for boys (rho.64) and a non-significant relationship for girls (rho.09).

We are inclined to interpret this sex difference as due to the greater degree of differentiation of females in expressive areas. In earlier research we have demonstrated that males are more differentiated in instrumental areas (Sutton-Smith & Roberts, 1964). This type of thinking depends upon an acceptance of the Talcott Parsons distinction between expressive and instrumental roles.

While this particular pilot finding cannot be regarded as too important or critical in itself, it does throw light on a larger concern which we have with the qualities of expression across a variety of expressive media. It is clearly of educational importance to know in what expressive areas a child's motivation and enthusiasm are located, as well as the types of expressive and cognitive development (spatial, temporal, etc.) most facilitated by those particular media.

In the current study (see Study six) the children are being asked to draw a picture of what they have just acted and to tell a story about a person finding a wallet. These latter two tests are being coded along inductive lines similar to those we have used for describing the improvisational drama above. We expect to be able to talk more authoritatively about fantasy competence across these three areas (There is not space here to spell out in greater detail the relevance of such studies to our understanding of psychological development. The matter is well treated in J. E. Singer's Daydreaming, 1966).

D. Other Studies.

We do not intend to spell out other studies in progress because these are mainly associated with the dissertations of our students. They are a testament to the fruitfulness of the present project, but their fulfillment depends to a great extent on the progress of the students. These studies are: (1) an inquiry into empathic understanding as revealed through dramatic enactment and conventional measures of empathy, (2) a study of the way in which children in "free" improvisational drama transform the conventional input (stories, premises, etc.) into holistic structures appropriate for their age level, (3) the deployment in dramatic space by

children of differential body image and body barriers, and (4) the role of narcissistic factors in preventing or maximizing the importance of dramatic involvement.

Conclusions

Our major conclusion is that there is a very substantial payoff for interdisciplinary research when collaborators of the apparently two disparate areas of drama and psychology work with mutual respect for the requirements of each other's discipline. It should be clear from the above details that we have opened up the possibilities of a far-reaching understanding of the role of drama in child development and learning. That we have been able to accomplish as much as we have with relatively minor funding (two assistants plus video equipment) is a testament to our students' enthusiasm and, we believe, the real potential for discovery in a novel undertaking of this sort. We have already been repeatedly requested to provide guidance for current drama programs in the New York City schools and have been offered facilities for continuing our research in a variety of settings. While we have talked informally with many teachers and students about our undertaking, we have not yet felt in a position to move systematically to the guidance of such programs, although that might well be a next step.

When the results of Study six above are properly set forth (as well as the subsequent studies to be carried out this Spring as indicated in Study two), we will have provided the first systematic and empirically based account of the way in which children of different ages vary in their approaches to improvisation.

APPENDIX A

PSYCHOLOGY AND DRAMA

During the Spring of 1969, the present investigators, professors of psychology and theatre respectively, initiated a joint exploration of the arts and social sciences with particular emphasis on the drama. In this article we wish to outline the paradoxes and excitement that arose from our initial attempts to make sense out of "The Psychology of Drama." The article deals in an essayistic and non-quantitative manner with some of the antimonies between social science and art in general, but more particularly it centers on a group of parallels between the "languages" of psychology and drama. This collaborative effort is illustrated mainly by our still quite preliminary methodological attempts to develop criteria for rating one of these parallels, the concept of involvement. In the final section we consider some of the impressions we have gleaned from this first cooperative venture.

Paradox and Promise

There is a built-in antimony between the artist and the social scientist. The former typically represents experience holistically whereas the latter typically represents it analytically. As a result, theatre personnel customarily resent the analytic tinkering of social scientists, feeling that the latter's selection of problems to study and methods of approach have very little to do with what theatre is about. Similarly, the social scientists tend to distrust the artists' reliance on intuitive judgments which are not convertible to operational definition nor exact measurement.

Classically these are basically two different ways of presenting human experience, neither simply reducible to the other. Artists are primarily concerned with the celebration of form and scientists with the analysis and manipulation of functions. Each has its heresies, of course. Theatre has its analytically-oriented dramatic theorists; social science has gestalt psychology, phenomenology, and so on.

The question for the present investigators was whether the dramatist could tolerate the analytic incursions of the psychologist, and/or whether the psychologist could respect the intuitive presentiments of the theatrician. Stated in a more practical manner, we were asking whether the dramatic mode of presentation has anything to say about human experience that is useful to the psychologist, and whether the empirical perspective of the psychologist can benefit the theatre. Considering that psychologists' root metaphors have at times derived from molluscs or rats, it is not hard to concede that the theatre might make its contribution as Goffman has insisted and as Sophocles bears witness. Or to put it another way, we were interested in whether a manipulative approach to theatre experience in process might not yield useful understandings of human behavior, its causes and cures, for the benefit of drama and psychology alike. This supposition is not hard to accept given the history of psychodrama and game simulation. But again, theatre is not everyday behavior anymore than psychodrama is theatre.

These then are some of the paradoxes and promises involved in moving into the twilight world between the two experiential realms. In the rest of this introductory discourse we will state these promises in terms of twin pairs of terms, each drawn from one of the realms, and each in various ways parallel to and enriching the other.

1. Rehearsal or Socialization

The director and actor have many methods of "getting into or rehearsing a role." The psychologist talks about the way in which children get into their roles as they grow older. To our knowledge, neither usually takes much notice of the other. For example:

(a) The actor may be helped into a role by reading or hearing discourse about it. This is one of the commonest methods of the acting process. It has never been popular with psychologists who have usually been concerned with more mute methods of conveying information, but it is still probably the commonest method by which parents attempt, perhaps fruitlessly, to socialize adolescents and it may well be the commonest method that adolescents use to socialize themselves.

(b) The most popular explanation offered by psychologists to explain how children learn their roles--and the explanation frequently abhorred by theatre people--is some variety of imitation or modelling (commonly called in the theatre "giving line readings" or "Mickey Mousing"). The power and reinforcement capacities of the adult have suggested to the psychologist that the adult is copied by the child. Unlike the child, the actor, however, is often considered to be aboriginal, transforming the role into his own image of its appropriateness. Whether or not in actual fact actors more often slavishly model directors than children model their parents, or children are more "original" than actors, is an interesting empirical question.

(c) Parents reward and punish as do directors. Again, however, the technique is more explicitly acknowledged in socialization theory than it is in theatre practice.

(d) Directors sometimes seek to help their actors by "arousing" them through various tactics, such as making them simulate terror by frightening them, exhausting by having them run around the block, anger by slapping them, fatigue by assuming the posture of the tired person, etc. These techniques have seldom been studied by psychologists, and indeed seem more often conveyed to children through story and game than through explicit teaching.

(e) A common source for actors, also, is the memory image sometimes called "sense memory," "emotion memory," or "recall," i.e., the evocation of a prior parallel experience in order to evoke the feelings of the current role. It is probable that this is also the primary tactic used by children, i.e., to accommodate to a novel requirement by assimilating it to some prior experience.

While the above are just a sample offering of the parallels between rehearsal and socialization, they immediately suggest the fruitfulness of reconsidering each realm in terms of the emphases of the other. While

psychologists usually consider each as if it was separable from all the others, the traditional practice in theatre is for a director to run the gamut of rehearsal techniques in order to achieve his ends regardless of his predominant coaching style. It may well be that parents proceed the same way. The scientific question is whether it is "representative" to take each of the rehearsal techniques separately and in an experimental setting to test it against the others in terms of its potential for role induction. We suppose that one may have to proceed with such unrepresentative univariate procedures first, and then perhaps proceed to using arrays of techniques in various combinations much as directors or parents use them in actual circumstances. An alternative procedure might be to use time-sampling observable procedures to find which combinations of procedures are most common, and then proceed to experiment with those.

In other work, we have been presenting children with models on video tape for them to imitate, varying the combinations of spoken and mimetic images, then videoing the children's responses in order to assess their selective reenactment of the presented messages. This specific study is still in the pilot stages.

2. Getting Into Character or Ontogenesis

Not unconnected with the above dialectic are the changes that occur in actors through the long haul of rehearsal and the changes manifest in children over the course of their development. Whether the development of the actor in role parallels in miniature the growth of a child in development (microgenesis) is unknown, but the similarities and differences are worthy of study. Is the basic line of development from the diffuse to the articulate, or from caricature to authentic representation? It seems probable that actors like children first perceive salient gestalts and reproduce these. If so, the methods of teaching creative dramatics may be at fault, as they tend to emphasize building an understanding of roles through analysis, rather than from some generalized and original reactions to the totality. It could be that proponents of creative dramatics have falsely taken a page from the social scientists and proceeded from the part to the whole, rather than the reverse. The child's excited, if caricatured, representations may be the proper starting point. One of our students, Neil Martin, has been experimenting with a variety of procedures in dramatic improvisations specifically with black and Puerto Rican functional illiterates in New York City. He began by using the standard creative dramatics practice of small, partial, isolated exercises, gradually cumulating to full story improvisation[1] but found this process utterly unsuccessful. This failure led him to attempt the unorthdox (to the field of informal dramatics) approach of presenting a total dramatic entity to his participants and permitting them to "do it all" at once. His success was virtually immediate.[2]

3. Projection vs. Projection

Projection in theatre is a stage technique as well as an aura surrounding the personality of the player. As stage technique it provides a way of discussing the size or force of the actor's affect per given environment. Thus, when a performer is criticized for "overprojecting," his total message (vocal and visual) is too large for the size of the playhouse; he is expending

too much energy per given space. Conversely, when the actor underprojects, he is not "registering" to his audience; the impact of his stimuli is not strong enough. Further, each actor has his own relative level of involuntary projection. Some actors seem to "radiate" more, or have a larger "sphere of influence" (Stanislavski[3]) than others. In psychology, projection stands for the expression of one's own feelings and motives indirectly through the way in which the subject tells stories about pictures, plays with dolls, paints pictures, etc. Here the subject is permitted to disguise his true self, but without realizing it he betrays his underlying affects through "projecting" them into stories apparently about someone else.

At the very least the dramatist and psychologist need to distinguish their different usages of the same term. One meaning clearly suggests overt and desired capacities, the other denotes covert and involuntary revelations. And yet the psychologist might well contend that within the actor's projection may be found expressions of his own psychological character, so that the one projection may in fact contain the other.

These pairs of terms will serve to illustrate the potential fruitfulness of the collaboration we are illustrating. Other pairs mentioned but not explicated at this point are: the notions of dramatic illusion as compared with the psychologist's study of illusions, hallucinations, and fantasies; script analysis versus content analysis; theatrical conventions of space and time versus the psychology of space and time; audience involvement versus psychological empathy; order and chaos versus equilibrium and disequilibrium; text and subtext versus manifest and latent content.

Of these various alternatives the term we chose first for further study was involvement. Like projection, this term is used by dramatic theorists and psychologists but with quite different intent. In pilot work with video, for example, we discovered that our definitions varied considerably. The psychologists were rating children as "involved" who had the appearance of what Goffman might term an "away" state.[4] Following Sarbin,[5] psychologists might rate degrees of involvement along a dimension proceeding from the highest point to the lowest: from voodoo death, through rites of passage (ecstasy), hysteria, hypnosis, heated acting, mechanical portrayal, to customary roles. Theatrical practitioners, on the other hand, work with a more specific theatric concept of involvement. The actor is "involved" not only when he appears "lost in the role," but also when his specific actions within that role are requisite to the task of dramatic portrayal.

The precise statement of the character of that involvement became the major focus for study. We argued that if involvement in drama could be reliably assessed, then this dependent variable could be used to tell us many other important things that were occurring within a dramatic session. Fluctuations in involvement, for example, might be a product of the "rehearsal" technique of the teacher, or a product of the participant's developmental level, or the result of the group processes. Alternatively, measures of dramatic involvement might predict to parallel responses in other forms of expression (musical or artistic) or social interaction (classroom or gymnasium). Again, improvements in dramatic involvement over a period of time might be paralleled by improvements in other forms

of behavior and preception. For example, it has become clear to Neil Martin (our student mentioned earlier) that functional illiterates do indeed improve in their capacities for involvement in fantasy over time, although their original attitude is most concrete and unreceptive to the assumption of "as if" states. In a future project we will be measuring the transfer of this involvement in the most orthodox "as if" disciplines such as reading and writing.

The Assessment of Dramatic Involvement

The vehicle for study was the naturalistic observation of a normal creative drama program with three groups of ages eight, nine, and ten years with approximately ten subjects in each group. These groups followed the lines indicated in standard creative dramatics texts.[6] While this program was in progress two observers kept detailed records of the behavior of the instructor, noting her verbal content, gestures, mimes, evoked imagery, evoked memory, etc., recording the full variety of role induction procedures mentioned earlier as they were employed with specific dramatic events.

Other observers regularly watched the children and simultaneously developed the rating scale for dramatic involvement which is described below. It is pertinent to mention that graduate students in theatre were used for the assessment and recording of the role induction procedures and psychology students for the assessment of the role involvement devices.[7] These two recording procedures followed independently with little overlap between the two observer teams except for calibrating, times, dates, episodes, etc., permitting subsequent inductive generalization about the relationships between the two sets (role induction and role involvement).

Certain phenomena were immediately apparent. The role involvement was highly susceptible to the role induction device. Some procedures were very effective, others not at all. Second, it was necessary to separate clearly dimensions of behavior which had to do with personal assets or liabilities that inflected performance in the drama. We concentrated on the former. The dimensions listed below neglect the psychological propensities of the players which affect that involvement, though these will be dealt with in subsequent work.

The following scale is of a preliminary nature only.[8] It is the product of many sessions of argument and discussion and the pitting of alternative perspectives against each other. Though we allocated seven points to the difference between each extreme point on our dimensions, this was more a matter of desire than operational specification at this early stage. Furthermore, the value of these dimensions varied as the children progressed, some being more appropriate to the beginners' stage, others to the players when they were more fully developed in the art form itself.

1. Focussed-Distracted

Initially, the focussed-distracted continuum was one of our most useful scales, because the primary problem in the early sessions seemed to be focus of attention. The measure indicated global focus of attention including general task involvement as well as completion of the activities. Later, as more of the children became capable of staying in field during acting, the scale was revised to be more specifically concerned with how

engrossed the child was in the dramatic task; how convincingly he seemed to be engaged in the performances of his "as if" behaviors. The child rated seven would reveal a constantly inward focussing of attention, would never look at others for cues or attention, would seem to be totally engrossed in what he was doing. The child rated six would behave similarly, but with somewhat less intensity and perhaps a slightly delayed warm up. Four would denote a median performance and a comparatively greater degree of variability in concentration and perhaps 'hamminess' in acting which might imply a limitation in the degree of focus. The child rated as one might look to the audience or to actors for cues, would not create a convincing world of imagination, and would easily be distracted by external cues or irrelevant internal stimuli.

In passing we should mention the clear differences that became apparent in children's ability to let go of their other selves. Even some children who were otherwise competent performers had constantly, as it were, to look up from their roles to a real or imagined person or audience. Some carried throughout a slightly self-conscious smirk, as if holding on to some reality other then the dramatic role. In the early stages, most of the children seemed to be reluctant to take on their dramatic role completely and to focus upon it a real boundary to be passed over from ordinary selves to dramatizing selves, and some children clearly kept a foot on both sides of the line.[9] In future work we hope to clarify these boundary phenomena and the relationships to both individual and developmental differences in the self-concept.

In addition, it seems that while some children are kept out of adequate focus by holding on to some earlier self-social nexus, there are yet other children who cannot concentrate on the required role by virtue of the present audience. They do not get into the role because the rest of the group members provide too inviting a support for clowning and thus for non-role-focussed behavior. Somewhere the child as an actor has to sort out his private internalized audience, the present audience of others, and the audience appropriate to the role being rehearsed.

2. Completes-Truncates

This was a measure of how well the child completes the basic task. In other words, does he include the major points of the dramatic problem in his performance; does he thoroughly develop each piece of business? This scale differs from elaboration (below) in that the business need not be innovative, but should be adequately developed and worked through to be clear to the viewer. There should be no suggestion that the participant is anxious to quit the acting arena as soon as he can. A rating of seven indicates a complete presentation of the dramatic task, including all necessary dramatic details, and an appropriate pacing so that the subtleties are clearly understood. A rating of four would indicate the omission of some parts of the task, but inclusion of major elements, or too fast a pace, so that some matters are skimmed over or not given proportionate emphasis; it might also be used when a child truncates the beginning to conclusion by rushing off the stage prematurely. A rating of one reveals omissions of important parts of the problem as well as other highly negative aspects of the continuum.

In early stages of the children's training, their apprehensiveness about being on stage tended to promote a quick glissade through the performance. Truncation seemed to supply the easiest avenue of escaping the situation quickly.

3. Consistent vs. Inconsistent Use of Imaginary Objects

This rating was particularly appropriate to pantomime. It was meant to be a measure of the capacity for creating convincing and palpable objects through physical means and conveying their properties, such as size, texture, weight, temperature, function, and shape in a consistent manner. Factors determining a high rating would include the number of relevant properties created and maintained consistently as well as the appropriateness of the gestures used to communicate credibility (no exaggerated or stereotyped movements). In young children, objects which are heavy are often lightly lifted, doors which are shut are walked through a moment later. The appropriate actions for the created object and respect for its character are important here.

Our problem with this variable was to determine whether we were dealing with the consistency or with the presence of this behavior. Some children simply do not create imaginary objects to any extent even though they are consistent with the ones that they do create. They end up being impoverished mimetically, though not inconsistent. We decided to include such impoverishment under the next category, and define this category only in terms of consistency.

4. Elaboration of Its Lack

This included the elaborative creation of new ideas in addition to the original dramatic task as presented by the teacher. It involves an innovative approach to solving the presented problem or the communication of additional or unusual facts about the imaginary objects used, which render them singularly vivid to the viewer. These details and complications must be relevant to the given task. While the opposite of relevant elaboration is clearly irrelevant elaboration, this did not emerge as the variable to be dealt with in rating children, though it clearly would with more developed actors. We were confronted with elaboration or its lack. Some elaboration merited a medium rating; excellent elaboration (relevance, palpability) merited a high rating. While excellence and relevance are thus conjoined in the present system, they may warrant separation in later work.

5. Appropriate or Poor Use of Space

High scorers used enough space to include all the objects needed, to allow for free bodily movement and to provide for variety, but not so much space as to become vague and clearly undefined. Low ratings would reflect the use of an unnaturally constricted area, poorly defined space and a tendency to use only one part of a larger area even though more was officially designated as a part of the stage.

6. Appropriate or Inappropriate Facial Expression

This rated the ability to use the face to convey convincing and credible emotional reactions of the character portrayed, as defined by the dramatic task presented or elaborated. Reactions had to be relevant, appropriate in intensity (neither too restrained nor too exaggerated or stereotyped) and show enough variety to maintain interest and indicate the child's constant involvement. Low ratings might indicate either inadequate variety or intensity of expression or exaggeration, stereotype, or sheer inappropriateness.

7. Appropriate or Inappropriate Body Movement

This measured the effectiveness of bodily movement in terms of its relevance to the given dramatic situation, appropriateness for a particular character (in terms of age, feeling, etc.), and success in communicating contextual message. Constricted movements, unless characterologically purposeful, or flaccid posture tend to diminish the child's stage presence and his ability to hold the viewer's interest. A high rating reflected the child's freedom of movement in space, his variety, velocity, and contour of movement (angular versus curved), and the relevance of this behavior to the mise en scene.

8. Appropriate or Inappropriate Vocal Expression

This measured the quality of voice and speech as expressive instruments and is analogous to facial expression, above, both being meant to convey emotional reactions of the character. It also reflected the child's ability to elaborate spontaneous verbal responses on stage within the dramatic context. A high score indicated clear vocal projection, relevance emotionally, and variety.

9. Appropriate or Inappropriate Social Relations

An awareness and reactivity to other participating children in the dramatic situation was the major indication of this scale. A high rating required that the child be convincingly involved with others, that he react to them in responding, that his pacing be appropriately related to theirs, that a consciousness of the group be in evidence. Low scorers may be encapsulated from others, so that their timing is inappropriate and their actions repetitive. They lack a give-and-take interaction with the other participants; they are too close or too far; they do not perceive the character of the other qualities which impede appropriate improvisational social interaction.

Some Psychological Considerations

It is clear from the above that we have by no means yet purified our variables for rating purposes. They were, however, reasonably appropriate for use with this group of young children involved chiefly in pantomime and improvisation. They might not be as useful for more formal dramatic presentations. The preliminary analysis of the ratings indicates that we were able to achieve an adequate degree of reliability in their use across our observers. But the full statement of the quantitative data will be presented in a subsequent paper where we hope to illustrate relationships between fluctuations in involvement and the particular programs being presented by the drama class teacher.

Looking again at the variables in the rating scale, however, we are impressed with the great variety of psychological studies which they suggest. For example, it seems likely that in addition to the dramatic and general developmental considerations mentioned above, children vary greatly in their ability to focus in drama. Distractibility, impulsivity, and hyperkinesis are well known variables in the psychological literature, and it seems not unlikely that individual differences of these sorts may well play a part in a child's ability to become involved, and when involved to be able to act effectively in some roles as compared with others. Perhaps we can classify roles in terms of their suitability for impulsive behavior, just as games have been so classified. Then again, there is the clinical dimension of "tolerance for unrealistic experiences." Does one require a certain tolerance for fantasy?

The problem might be raised whether completion and truncation have anything to do with "task persistence" which has often been measured at least for intellectual concerns. Is concentration of one sort akin to concentration of the other sort?

Again consistency or inconsistency of use seem psychologically akin to non-distractibility, or at least to ability to maintain the "as if" response set. Although focus and consistency are meaningfully different in dramatic terms, they may both relate to a central psychological variable.

Elaboration appears to be made for psychologists as a different type of test of creativity. Does elaboration in drama relate positively to elaboration in words or in art or in music? Given the literature indicating that it is often the non-kinetic people who make the most kinetic responses in projective fantasies, we might as appropriately expect to find the reverse as direct relationships between excellence in one area and excellence in the other. Although unidimensional models tend to dominate in psychology (cognitive, learning, etc.), personality theory is much more familiar with multi-dimensional models. We might expect, therefore, to get an uneven profile with individuals excelling in one area but not in another.

In a preliminary view of some of our results, it looks as if involvement in drama as rated above and competence in drawing which we tested with these children and assessed independently may be positively correlated for boys, but not correlated for girls. This may mean that females may have a more differentiated expressive profile whereas males have a more global response to expressive possibilities. If so, the finding would appear to reverse the situation found in instrumental or achievement areas where males are typically more differentiated (have an uneven profile across competences), whereas females are less differentiated.[10] In any case, the importance of a more general examination of differentiated competences across expressive areas (drama, music, art, dance, etc.) and instrumental areas (reading, arithmetic, science, etc.) and their interrelationships is certainly indicated.

Again, variables of space and bodily expression might have something to do with a person's sense of body barriers, or his body image, which are well known psychological concepts. At the very least the deployment and expression of the body in dramatic space should permit studies of that sort.

Appropriateness of facial, verbal and gestural expression would again appear to refer to more comprehensive characteristics of individual expressive style. Social appropriateness could be expected to reflect level of competence in social interaction, empathy and social insight.

The most important point about these speculative associations is that if it becomes possible to develop reliable techniques for assessing dramatic involvement along the lines of the above involvement scale, then it can yield us a new avenue into the understanding of the functioning of many of these other psychological variables in human personality and development.

Some Dramatic Considerations

But no matter what these studies may do for psychology, the more important immediate yield must lie in what they can do for the understanding of child development through drama and for the analysis of the theatrical experience, per se. Our immediate impression, for example, is that through the course of the two months training, all of the children became more capable of focussing attention, of completion, of the consistent use of imaginary objects, of the relevant use of space, of elaboration, of projection and of appropriate facial, verbal, body use and social interaction. We must insist that this is a primary gain for drama. These are children who presumably will be more competent both in the performance and understanding of drama in subsequent years (within the limits of the progress made). More important, perhaps, is the notion that these children will also be more competent in the macrocosm of human socialization.

It is our expectation, of course, that even more will be accomplished, and we have in mind subsequent studies in which we will be concerned with classical transfer of drama training effects into other areas of school life.

We have observed in our work with children in improvisational drama that an unmistakable parallel seems to emerge between their developmental behavior and that of the adult professional actor in the process of creating a performance. Further, those uniquely discernable modes of behavior exhibited by certain children in informal dramatics seem characteristic of various styles and types of professional actors and how they work. Other more sophisticated similarities have occurred all of which suggest a fruitful avenue of inquiry which tests the hypothesis that adult professional actors and children in creative dramatics go through the same general processes. Perhaps one day it may be possible to predict accurately and easily dramatic aptitude or potential at various age levels.

Since the beginnings of civilization, man has participated as actor and audience in the dramatic event. Whether defined as ritual, game, theatre, improvisation, or cathartic psychodrama, there is something important enough about the experience inherent in "acting out" to keep it alive and popular, perhaps even essential, throughout the ages. It is astounding that such an apparently unique and significant human activity has not warranted more systematic analysis of the kind at least attempted in our work. Neither the theatrician nor the psychologist can do the job

alone. And the job, in our opinion, is very important.

In conclusion, we are sanguine that some genuine progress both for drama and psychology is possible (and for the arts and social sciences in general) in a program of study in which respect for the different functioning of the two forms is allied with a readiness to "play the role of the other."

APPENDIX A

FOOTNOTES

Dr. Lazier (Ph.D., Southern Illinois University, 1965) is Associate Professor of Theatre and Co-director of the Drama Workshop at Teachers College, Columbia University. Dr. Sutton-Smith (Ph.D., University of New Zealand, 1954) is Professor of Psychology and Principal Advisor in Developmental Psychology at Teachers College, Columbia University. The authors gratefully acknowledge the support of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, TITLE IV (Project No. 90032), for research subsidy leading to concepts reported herein. Additional support for some of thea research was received from the Public Health Service Grant #5 ROI-MHI-5786-02.

1 See Winifred Ward, Playmaking with Children (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957); Geraldine Brain Siks, Creative Dramatics: An Art for Children (New York: Harper and Row, 1958); and Isabel B. Burger, Creative Play Activities (New York: The Ronald Press, 1966) for representative examples.

2 This study is detailed in Gil Lazier, "Dramatic Improvisation as English-Teaching Methodology," The English Record, October, 1969 (in press).

3 See My Life In Art (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1924), An Actor Prepares (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1936), and Building A Character (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1949), Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood tr.

4 See Behavior in Public Places (New York: Free Press, 1963).

5 See "Role Theory" in G. Lindsey, ed., Handbook of Psychology (Cambridge: Addison-Weslen, 1954).

6 See footnote #1.

7 The students who took part in recording the behaviors of the drama teachers were: James Lee Austin, Rebecca Kaiser, and Neil Martin. The students who participated in developing the involvement scale were: Rosalind Barnett, Bob David, Steve Goldman, Birgitte Mednick, Amy Miller, and Miriam Viselman.

8

We were given initial help by a paper of A. Thurman and N.D. Bowers presented at the 1968 Children's Theatre Conference convention in Los Angeles, entitled, "The Development of Instruments designed to Assess Pupil Ability in Creative Dramatics."

9

These phenomena are isomorphic to recurrent tendencies among adult professional actors.

10

See B. Sutton-Smith and J.M. Roberts, "Rubrics of Competitive Behavior," Journal of Genetic Psychology, 1964, 105, 13-37.

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B

YOUR CHILD THE ACTOR

Introduction

Now, more than ever before, the average citizen requires resources of imagination and humor. In a cultural crisis of vastly expanding knowledge and greatly increasing human expectation, the need for people who can react wisely and imaginatively is accelerated. It is our belief that one way to achieve this end is to place the development of the imagination at the very center of the child rearing and educational process.

Our book moves in that direction. It is meant to assist both parents and children to develop their imaginative powers. The method is mutual play and improvisational drama. We make the claim that adults who use these techniques, whether as parents, as leaders in programs for the disadvantaged, or as teachers in classrooms, will increase both their own imaginative powers and those of their children. In addition, their mutual relationships with the children will be more pleasant in other ways, and the motivation of the children for the more formal and conventional forms of learning will also increase. In a much larger sense, we are optimistic that through accentuation these methods of human adaptation an important contribution can be made to the survival and enjoyment of the human family and society.

Currently, with the help of research grants funded by the Office of Education and the National Institute of Mental Health, we are exploring the ways in which children develop through dramatic improvisation. Our work there, however, will take many years to probe the various theoretical and developmental issues involved. In the meantime we feel it is important to speak out on what we see to be the important practical ways in which adults can proceed immediately to the encouragement of the imaginative life, and to the help, therefore, of their own troubled society.

We come to this activity as experts in child psychology (Sutton-Smith) and children's dramatic play (Lazier). Our unique relationship stems from the fact that we are both sensitive to each other's disciplines. Lazier has a background in psychology even though he is an authority on the drama. Sutton-Smith, one of the foremost researchers in the psychological dimensions of children's play and games, has a natural affinity and understanding for the theatrical phenomena. One other important commonality is our positive orientation to today's social and psychological institutions. We view the child within the family as having the potential for tremendous emotional growth and have dedicated ourselves to finding ways to increase the joy of living for the child. In sum, we, as experts in our fields, have united because of our common interest in how one learns to have fun with living.

CHAPTER ONE

For a long time it has been said that the family is fading away. There are no more grandparents under the same roof. Father doesn't do his work at home any longer. Mother doesn't bake bread or can beans. She may be away at work all day while the children are at nursery school. Some say the family is literally falling apart.

We don't agree with this. We believe that the family is changing radically, but it is not fading away. Every decade over the past fifty years the family has grown more involved with itself. In terms of the way in which the parents and children relate to each other it is now of enormous complexity.

For example:

The father is shaving in front of the mirror.

His three year old son wanders into the bathroom.

"Tell me a story," he says.

"No," say the father, "I'm in a hurry this morning."

The son examines him steadily for a moment. "Why have you got those on?" He reaches up and touches his fingers to his father's soap and whiskers.

"They're my whiskers," the father says. "I shave them off every day."

"Why do you put them on?" queries the son.

So what is the father going to do now? Fifty years ago he would not have let his son into the bathroom with him in any case. Nor having let him in, would he have gotten himself to the spot of making up a story every morning to please him.

Those stories:

"O. K. then, give me any three people and I'll make up a story," says the father wearily.

"A bird, a grasshopper and a fairy."

"Well, once upon a time there was this magic grasshopper that was really a cookie. It was delicious to taste. The only trouble was, when you ate it, you also turned into a cookie. The fairy had her favorite bird that went out one day and discovered the grasshopper. Of course, she couldn't resist it. So she ate it. Now the fairy was herself a cookie. What could she do now? If any one saw her they would want to eat her. Then someone would want to eat them, and so it would go on until the whole world was one big cookie. And that's just what happened The whole world ended up being pretty kooky."

With such a pun, the father if lucky escapes for breakfast, and if not is forced to say once again that it is really only a story, and in stories anything can happen, and you can all have a lot of fun.

Fifty years ago when asked about why he put his whiskers on, he would have grunted for the child not to speak such nonsense and have been done with the matter. Now he has to think about why his child thinks like that, and what is the best way to explain to a three year old the secondary sexual effects of the gonads and the pituitary glands.

The family today is full of these decisions. There is a mental life on both the real level and the story level which simply did not exist a century ago. Yesterday's family was large in work. Today's family is large in feeling and thought. Tomorrow's family may be even larger in imagination. Like the atomic bomb the modern family has discovered psychological fission. There are increasingly new understandings, new feelings, new subtleties and new fantasies to be coped with.

For example:

> The eleven year old daughter comes complaining to the mother. "Whenever I have friends over," she says, "He interferes." He is her younger eight year old brother. "He says silly things about them. Calls them glass eyes, or says they smell. It's just awful and embarrassing." So the mother discussed it with the father. What should they do? Reprimand the boy? Explain that he shouldn't do that? What is he doing it for anyway?

Maybe at this point the mother consults an expert. She joins those increasing millions of mothers who have listened to the child psychologist on television or read his statements in the paper. But why does she bother? Is it because there's no grandmother around to tell her what to do and what to ignore? Is it because as a modern woman she has more power to make decisions for the family? Is it because her contact with people of other creeds and races has made her aware of the many choices available? Or is it because she believes that it is possible to make a better life for herself and her children by being her own judge of good and evil?

Whatever the reasons she will have come more and more to trust the experts. They seem to have offered some promise that the modern family could indeed hold together and not fall apart. We want to make the point, however, that these experts have been, by and large, a fairly sober group of people. Mainly they have been concerned with what might go wrong with the family and how to avoid trouble. In earlier years they used to act as if one particular punishment on the parents' part or one particular behavior on the child's part (thumbsucking, nail chewing) might permanently affect character and development. Fortunately, the research evidence has given little support to this. There is little evidence that what a parent does in the early years of life fixes the child's behavior in permanent tracks. Parents must be consistently disastrous in their handling to produce a sick child all by themselves. Most of the behaviors that concern parents disappear as children get older. Though they are sometimes replaced by others that are as bad or worse! Still our point is that these experts have given their main attention to what has been wrong in family relationships.

This expert concern with family's troubles probably arose because of the great difficulties our civilization had in shifting from the older work-centered family to the modern thought and feeling-centered family. These changes are presumably just as difficult as the changes associated with shifting from the horsedrawn carriage to the airplane. Furthermore the advantages aren't often quite as clear to us, even when we do speak proudly of "My child the doctor," or "My child the scientist." The advice of the experts reflect the dislocations of moving from one historical type of family to another. And as well, the seriousness of the experts is a part of the very soberness of Western Civilization. We have been a civilization that has triumphed by taking work seriously, and not giving much time nor thought to other things. Naturally for us, if bringing up children is important, then it should be hard work. When the first mothers got together in societies to discuss rearing children (this was in the 1820's), one of their major topics was how to break the child's will. They wanted to nip wilfulness at its roots. Today's experts often seem to be still nipping neurosis at the roots.

In contrast to the seriousness of most experts, this book deals with the unserious things in the family. We argue that not only is the family not fading away, it is becoming a more interesting place in which to grow up. Furthermore, we argue that its humor and liveliness are the best preparation for life in a thinker's world. Humor and imagination are the things that make for an interesting and stimulating life, and they promote thought. The family that jokes around the breakfast table, not only enjoys the meal, it stimulates the younger ones to be mentally alert, to tell their own experiences in an interesting way, and to look for new ways of looking at or talking about everyday experiences. The term thinking-family is probably too limited for this sort of behavior. The word imaginative-family is probably better. That is as long as we learn to associate imagination with the work of successful scientists, politicians, architects and businessmen, and realize that the best of these individuals were those who had imagination and the worst were those who had none. Too often the word imagination is used only to refer to the works of poets and artists and to children's play. But that disguises its real importance and gives undue emphasis to hard work, shrewdness, or intelligence. One of the puzzles of our time is that we herald the results of great imagination when we see it, but have no idea how to develop it, in fact seldom consider the matter.

Yet if we agree that imagination is important, that indeed the survival of our civilization may well depend on leadership by more people with it, where do we see it seriously discussed? We seldom advise a mother to deal more imaginatively with her family. Nor do we say of a teacher that she suffers a deficit of imagination. No instead we say she can't cope, or that she should relax and be less anxious, both of which pieces of advice have to do with how she works, not with her capacity to be inventive and imaginative with children.

This book then deals with the development of imaginative relationships between parents and children, and it will be useful also to teachers with their children. It gives a blow by blow account of how these relationships can be developed from infancy through the High School years. Our chapters are organized around the three great events in the development of imaginative

life. In the rest of this introduction we want to outline these three major events, some by methods for enhancing imagination, and deal also with the awkwardness which any parent might feel at being asked to actually play or to actually act with his own children.

UNDERSTANDING "AS IF"

The first major event in the development of the child's imaginative life occurs when the child is able to pretend. Here is an example from the famous child psychologist, Jean Piaget:

> The fifteen month old takes hold of a cloth with frayed edges which is something like her pillow. She seizes it, folds it over her finger, sucks her thumb and lies down on the floor curled up as in sleep. She keeps her eyes open but from time time blinks them hard as if asleep. She laughs loudly.

Here the child treats the cloth as if it is her pillow. When a child can treat a block as if it is a car, or a house, or the kaleidoscope of objects that it can become, he has made the first great leap in the development of his imagination and this usually occurs between the ages of one and two years.

But this great change does not happen equally to all. Some children develop more imagination than others, and this has a great deal to do with how their parents and others relate to them. There has been increasing evidence in recent years that many children grow up in homes where there is little stimulation for this to happen. There are few books, no one reads, no one tells stories, no one makes jokes, no one gets down on the floor and crawls around like a horse. Of course, these are strange things to do. In human history most families have not done that sort of thing. Instead they have been groups within which children had to grow up with an ability to use their bodies as hunters or herders or warriors. They were expected to use their play to test their bodies, rather than to exercise their minds. In fact, they were often told not to wag their tongues, to speak when they were spoken to, and to do what they were told. In modern society also where children grow up with parents who earn their living by their hands rather than their brains, there is often little encouragement for pretending. Such children learn how to be physically skillful enough to survive in the streets. They can run fast and fight well. Unfortunately, where there has been this type of life, and where there has been little pretending with it, there is also little capacity for invention and for abstract thought.

What we call abstract thought is really a form of pretending. Both reading and arithmetic which are examples of abstract thought depend on us pretending that little marks on the page such as a...e...c...1...4... 16... can stand for something else which we can actually see or touch or handle. You and I take for granted that the number 5 can mean 5 chickens, or 5 pieces of chalk, or 5 beanbags, or 5 cups of spilled milk or 5 bananas. But it takes quite a while for a child to separate out the fiveness from the spilt milk and the bananas. Because, after all, fiveness is only in our heads. All we actually see and touch is spilt milk and bananas. It

is easier for a small six year old to understand fiveness if he has already spent much of his life pretending that he has an imaginary companion, or that he can be a fireman, or a spaceman or even a computer. Children who have not spent much time pretending have a very hard time pretending that the little marks on a page can mean anything. One form of pretending helps the other.

In the modern world where we can only survive if we grasp such abstract things as timetables, inventories, itineraries, and computers then getting used to believing in and playing with objects and roles and identities which are only in one's head is of considerable importance.

Still those who do not get such imaginary play are not, therefore, abnormal. They represent, rather, the main stream of human history up to this point. It is a new event in human history for children to be permitted and even encouraged to participate in make believe during most of their growing years. We recollect the old seventeenth century schoolmaster who issued the terrible warning against letting children play. "For those who play young," he warned, "Will play when old!" Exactly!

Today when every adult member of a family or a society must be able to take many roles (be husband, boss, churchman, PTA representative, salesman, etc.), then he needs to be prepared for it. He needs to be prepared also for the fact that all these roles keep changing. His business changes its character, his employees make unexpected demands, his church modifies its rituals, his school goes on strike, his products are entirely new. A childhood which includes a great amount of diversified dramatic play seems like a good preparation for an adult who needs to be flexible.

This book will be a stimulus to those who already play with their children and to those who work with children who have not been played with and to those who do not themselves yet know how to make believe with their children! The first step is the development of the child's ability to act "as if" things are different than they actually are.

We do this by stimulating the child in the first year to play and laugh with us, and then between the ages of one year and four years we help him in the creation of imaginary objects and imaginary places.

THE IMAGINARY CONVERSATION

The second great step in the evolution of the imagination usually happens between three and five years when the child begins to participate in collective play. Here he shares a world which is imagined by both participants. They converse and act in terms of things unseen.

For example:

> The little girl suggested to the four year old boy in nursery school that they should get married and play house. The boy refused stressing that he was going to marry his father. "You can't marry your father," said the little girl. "I can too," retorted the boy,

> "He goes to work." With which the boy hopped on his bicycle and pretending to be the father pedalled about the room. The little girl waved goodbye and went on washing dishes in the play house sink. When the boy returned he sat at the table and she served him an imaginary meal. She asked if he liked it, and he pretended to eat with grunts of approval.

In this example the two children are partly out of touch and partly in touch with each other's mental life. While the girl knows what marriage is about, the boy does not yet know the meaning of the word, but responds to it as if they are both talking about what is most important for their future. So in the beginning there is no conversation, but when they settle to playing at customary things such as going to work and eating meals, then they share a common mental world. There is, we might say, a conversation of action and words.

If we take a closer look at this experience, we can see some truly imaginative things occurring. First, there is a unique kind of communication going on between these children. If someone were to walk into the room at the point at which the imaginary meal was being served, consider what he might see: a little girl making some repetitive motions with her hands and arms while bending over a seated boy, followed by the boy producing some similar gestures. But these children, with no prior planning or practice, know precisely what one another is doing and further <u>they reinforce</u> one another's activities in very satisfying ways. The girl, of course, is a girl but she is also a mother serving a meal; the boy is still the same boy but he is also the father, responding to the girl-mother's cues, and receiving a very special kind of creative pleasure.

Even more important, perhaps, is the fact that these children are visualizing--seeing vividly with their mind's eyes--similar imaginary objects and using these make-believe things <u>as if</u> they were real. The very second the girl sets an imaginary meal in front of the boy, he knows what it is (even if there is nothing on the plate, or no plate at all, for that matter), "sees it," and uses it. He might even "drop" the plate or "spill" the make-believe coffee, or add other details which spontaneously materialize within the situation. Whatever the response, the imagination of each child enhances and stimulates the imagination of the other. From a dramatic point of view we have now added to the creation of objects and the creation of scenes, the creation of characters and the creation of some minor conflicts. What we have called the "imaginary conversation" includes all these things, but it is their shared quality which we wish to stress with this title.

In the previous section we pointed out the importance of "as if" capacity for mental life in general. It follows that sharing "as if" situations with others implies a readiness for mutual planning and mutual thinking, although at this level what is paralleled is perhaps the more reverie-like and intuitive, rather than the more logical adult examples. When the boy and girl in the above case partly communicate and partly don't, this is not too unlike much adult conversation where people talk together without really talking with each other. Many of our experiences over coffee or dinner with good friends are of this sort. We often cherish our friends partly because they are prepared to hear us out, to listen to

our ramblings, and because we can do the same for them. What this means is that there continues even in later life to be something very important about groups in which people can share the only partly shareable.

These imaginary conversations give us support but allow us to make contributions in our own way. It is not surprising perhaps that some attempts to encourage creativity among executives involve putting them in groups and asking them to "free associate" in a similar unsystematic way. Members often learn more from each other and get more stimulation when there is, at least in the early phases of group work, just this sort of free-floating thinking going on.

Imaginary conversations of this order have become more common among children since the advent of television with its abundance of shared programs and shared commercials. These provide the same fantasies in terms of which the children can react and around which their play or talk can be developed.

In sum, first one must learn to believe that pretending is possible and next that it can be shared with others.

THE IMPROVISATIONAL GAME

The third leap in imaginative development, coming between the years of seven and eleven years, is a game between the children, in which their activities are fairly free but continue according to some pattern or some rules.

For example:

> "I enjoy being a girl because we are more mature than the boys and we know what we are doing and they don't. When a boy carries my books for me or smiles at me, I can say to the other girls: Guess what? Eddy carried my books. And then they argue about a boy of theirs. But I can move Eddy round like a checker on a board. Boys can't do that. Even if they wanted to, they have to pretend they really aren't interested in girls even while they're showing an interest in one. We know what we are doing and we can enjoy it. Boys are unconscious. They still act like they're interested in trains. Some days we play a game of taking turns at walking through the boy's playground. The others watch from a distance, and each girl sees how close she can walk to the boy she has chosen. Then when she gets back, she boasts about it. Someone else takes a turn. Sometimes the boys discover what is happening and then they chase us all away, which is even better."

In this report of an eleven year old girl, we have an example in which a game is made up on the spot. It's not a well established traditional game, although it's certainly a traditional pastime between girls and boys.

Historical studies of children's games show that there are more of these sorts of improvisational games today and fewer of the more formal games which once occupied children's time.

What is important here is that children learn to improvise within some general pattern of rules. We would argue that much of modern life is like this and requires this sort of ability. But the improvisational game has more than system or rules to it. It includes our earlier elements of imaginary objects and imaginary scenes. It includes imaginary characters and imaginary conflicts. But now to these it also adds climaxes, and even alternation. As in games, the players may change parts. These types of skill are best illustrated by the activity of theatre games and improvisational drama.

Perhaps we hardly need to illustrate the contribution we feel that these later skills make to diplomacy in politics, business, family life; in sensitivity to the nature and needs of other people; in ability to suggest group "ideas," "projects," "creations" which are meaningful to others because of the experience on which they are based.

In summary, we have said that imagination goes through three major stages in a child's development. First he learns to pretend; next he learns to share imagination with others; finally he learns to discipline his shared imagination to some system of rules. And we have suggested that as parents we can help him learn the most from these three stages by playing and laughing with him, by participating with him in the creation of imaginary objects, scenes, characters, conflicts, rules, plots, climaxes and in the changing of roles. Throughout we have implied that these particular developments in his mental and imaginative life are of great importance to the child's future as an insightful and creative social person. Our effort in this book will be to encourage these developments in the family as a way of making it a more effective basis for learning how to live in an increasingly complex world, and as a part of that, as a way also of increasing the joyfulness and fun within the family.

PLAYING AND DRAMATIZING WITH CHILDREN

Before proceeding to the details, however, we want to deal with the objection that it would be absurd to participate in playing or acting with your children. "What, me play make-believe with my kids? Are you kidding?" There's a long held view that children's play is something for kids. It's too trivial to be taken seriously, and something for them to do, until they get old enough to what is important. What this really means is that our civilization has based its major success on hard working adults. So much so that it has pretty much ignored children's play. As a result we have not understood their play very well. And yet, though it seems unimportant, because it's not work, there's now lots of evidence from animal studies and from anthropology that in each group children actually do much of their growing up while they play. At play they test out their own abilities, they test out their own feelings, they explore their environment and they gain from all of this a sense that they can indeed have mastery. What seems like play to us is often hard work to them. We would need to take play more sriously than we have traditionally even if we were only concerned with the sort of workers children would be later on.

A more sensible objection to playing with children, however, comes from those who understand all this and who say, "Look, children's play is their work and their world. Leave it to them. Don't spoil it by trying to organize it. You'll defeat their own attempts to get mastery." Our answer to that is that there is a built-in check against too much meddling in children's play. Namely, how much fun is it for all the participants? If it is fun, it can continue. If not fun then you are not succeeding. If a too sober parent gets hold of our advice and administers it like a practice in solitaire, then all we can say is "poor baby." The baby will be made over-dependent on the parent but not otherwise worse off. Babies love all the attention they can get. But if the message that the baby gets from the parents' attempts to play is always serious, the baby's mind is not made more flexible by that. At least not in our way. We believe that when the relationship is full of laughter and fun, then this occurs because the child is a participant in doing independently funny things. The child shares with the parent by making its own contributions. But still we do agree that while we are going to advocate more play between parent and child, we don't believe that all play should be that way. Much of it has to be left to the child itself. There are solitary things we must accomplish through play as well as social ones. This book is about the social fun.

Most probably the parents who try these exercises will begin to invent new plays and games of their own and become more thoroughly spontaneous themselves. This is a book which is, after all, not meant just for children. It is intended for parental growth at the same time. The real evidence of progress is the fact that the parent has reached that point of inventiveness and spontaneity where he doesn't need our book anymore.

But if some parents have a problem with the idea of playing with their children, others will be even more disturbed by the notion of acting with them. Yet many of the suggestions we make below come from drama. They are largely exercises which have been used by creative artists for thousands of years, although they seldom have been viewed in the way we are looking at them in this book. The techniques are natural; children do them instinctively. All we are doing is suggesting ways they can be used for their maximum benefit, ways to get the most pleasure out of the experiences, and ways to use these games for their most rewarding developmental effect.

Some of the techniques which are suggested in the following chapters have been used by professional actors throughout the ages. Others have been perfected recently for the specific purposes of our work. Still others will be immediately familiar to most of the parents who read this book because they have participated in similar activities as children. The two very important things to remember about these games are (1) that the process is important not the product, and (2) that with a little practice, any adult and any child can do them successfully.

A few summers ago, a concerned parent came to see us about his wife who was involved in a special workshop of ours in creative child development and the drama. He was a lawyer with a considerable number of clients who were film and television actors. After a few preliminary words, he got right to the point. "Look," he said, "I'm around actors constantly so I know what I'm talking about and I don't want my son to become an actor. It's too difficult a life, even with all the glamour. I don't want Markie to be an actor, and that's that!" We smiled at one another, remembering

Markie, a bright, well-behaved eight-year-old who had come with his mother on a few occasions to participate in our workshop. Our smile was caused not only by pleasant memories of the fun we had, but also by the fact that neither the mother, ourselves nor the boy for that matter had the first thought about a career for him in the theatre. We asked the lawyer why he was telling us this and he explained that Markie and the boy's mother were doing improvisational games regularly in the living room and they reminded him of some of the acting exercises he had seen in the course of his business. Further, Markie had told him how much the boy enjoyed these activities. At this point we asked the lawyer if he had the opportunity to play football with his son on the weekends. He said that of course he did, and further that "Markie and I play catch every chance we get and I referee a game of Touch Football every Saturday at the park. Markie helps out." We then said, "Are you worried about your son becoming a professional football player? That's a tough life, too, you know, even with all the glamour." We explained that the likelihood of Markie becoming a professional actor because of his playing drama games and the likelihood of his becoming a profootball player because of his playing catch or some "touch" weekend games were about the same. We also explained that the effects of the two kinds of experiences--drama games for fun and sports--were similar, although they contributed to different developmental processes.

For Markie, his sports activities are very important, even though he probably won't go into sports as a vocation. Parents accept the value of sports activities in and out of school without question. We feel that the same should be said about the play and games presented in this book. They are essential, crucial activities. The process is the important thing, its benefits and the pleasures it gives. It really doesn't matter that Markie might never be big enough to play pro football or even high school or college ball. He can still enjoy participating in the game even if he will never reach professional standards of excellence. The same is true of the exercises in this book. They can be done "successfully" by anyone, since "success" is measured only in the personal pleasure and growth of the participants. In the drama no one worries about winning or losing.

But what, specifically is this "drama" thing we've been talking about and how is it done? We have already mentioned its tremendous benefits in developing the imaginative, creative life of the child which prepares him for a creative, imaginative life as an adult in vocation and leisure. We have stated that its purpose is not to train professional actors and have compared its long range effects to those of sports participation. In explaining the "rules" of this drama game, another comparison to professional football might be useful. Most people realize that football, as it is played by professionals, is a very intricate sport, complete with specific rules and strategies. So too professional drama is an extremely complex thing. But just as it is possible to simplify football to the point that most anyone of most any age can participate and have fun, it is perhaps even easier to simplify the dramatic improvisation so that very young children and their parents, with no prior training can participate--and can do it in the comfort of their own living rooms.

We will present a more complete definition later, but in its basic form, participation in a drama game simply means putting yourself in the place of another, or it means putting yourself in another place. All you

have to do is act as if you were someone else or were somewhere else. Your living room, through the imagination of you and your child, suddenly becomes an African desert. You don't even need sand; you can make believe that grains of the warm, white, arid substance are trickling through your fingers. You can act as if you and your six-year-old are riding the same camel to the oasis in the dining room. You, as the leader of the Riffs, are taking the Prince of the Berbers to his castle in North Morocco just south of the kitchen closet. Or anyplace you and your children wish, doing anything you wish, being anyone you choose. It takes a while to get the hang of doing it, but the process is fun.

In this book, we present step-by-step procedures for rewarding participation in these games. We will indicate first the developmental processes to be enhanced by these activities and relate them to specific age groups of children. Then we will indicate a variety of games which can be played by children and/or parents and their children. Finally, we will explain the actual steps which can be followed in order to gain pleasure and productive imaginative growth. Through this process perhaps "your child, the actor" today can more effectively become "your child, the creator" tomorrow. And if not, we've all had fun in the process anyway and made the family a happier group.

To sum up, we have said that the family is not fading away. Rather it is growing more complicated. It is a place where children can develop the imaginative powers they need in todays world. To do this, however, needs a training in imagination. In this book we seek to give advice on playful and dramatic arts which parents can share with their children in order to make this occur.

Chapter Outline

1. Preparing for the First Pretending (Play and Laughter)
2. The Exercise of As If (Imaginary Objects)
3. Preparing for the Imaginary Conversation (Shared Imaginary Scenes)
4. The Imaginary Conversation (Shared Imaginary Characters and Conflicts)
5. Preparing for the Improvisational Game (Rules, Climaxes, and Roles)
6. The Improvisational Game

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1: Preparing for the First Pretending (Play and Laughter).

This chapter deals with the very beginnings of the fun relationship with the baby. There is an account of the principles involved in establishing the degree of familiarity that provides the basis for this fun to occur, and of the type of variations in the parents' behavior that provoke secure surprise and delight. Particular attention is given to the development of smiling and laughter, to social play with the infant, and to the key role of parent and child imitations. The plays are listed and described which are suitable month by month during the first 18 months of the infants' life; plays such as Hide and Seek, Peek-a-boo are well known but the many interesting and systematic ways in which the parents can use position in space, delays in time of appearance, and responses to the babies own physical actions have never been dealt with in detail.

Around about four months, when the infant is thoroughly familiar with the parent's face, and smiles and chatters when seeing it; the parents can often produce laughter by some mild exaggeration of customary behavior. By quietly nuzzling the head into the infant's stomach just after the previous smiling and chattering, a chortle or gurgle of gleefulness is brought forth. But this usually works only if it develops out of the previous happy and secure enjoyable social activity together. At a later age around eleven months a cry of delight can be evoked by sudden disappearances and return. For example, if the parent suddenly pops up from behind a sofa, the baby (by now sitting or standing) may at first show a slight surprise and a little mild shock at the sudden appearance. But then immediately recognizing the well known face, burst forth into gales of laughter, relieving the tension of the moment before.

We take the view that the fun that occurs in smiling and laughing and in social play provides the readiness for later pretending, and that the mutual imitations of infant and parent are the first beginnings of the theatric relationship of actor and audience.

Chapter 2: The Exercise of As If (Imaginary Objects).

We discuss first when to leave the child to his own play and when to participate in it. This is a most important distinction because play has to serve the child's own needs first. His independence is most important. Second there is an account of the varieties of make-believe that occur between two and four years. These include the child's first distinctions in play between self and others and between one object and another; they involve also his first play imitations and a little later his first play identifications.

Around two years of age, the child first extends his notion of himself beyond calling himself a little baby or a little boy or a little girl, to the title of a cowboy or mother or whatever. It is possible to get down on the floor and be his horse, or be another cowboy. Or in the case of a girl, to get down on the floor and be another visiting mother, or if you are versatile enough, perhaps even the baby. The child by now well enough

entrenched in his make-believe is delighted by these transformations. An important effect of such occasional participation is the greater enthusiasm and vigor which the child now has for her own games. They become more rather than less useful for the development of creative ideas and alternatives.

By three years of age we have to deal with a miniature society, first of pairs of persons (mother and baby) and later of families of persons. At each step from the first representations of objects, to the larger gatherings in the doll house, the parents can enter into these plays and contribute to their vividness and their elaboration. Again step by step we give examples of what the child does naturally, and of the additions and elaborations that the parents can make. Parallel to these events in play, there is another series of motor and social games as well as motor and social jokes in which both participate. Examples of these and types of participation are outlined.

Late in this stage, exercises to develop sense perception are added. Children work primarily individually, developing sensory capacity by reacting to specific stimuli in games and play. For example, the child (or children) is asked to sit cross-legged on the living room rug. He is told to shut his eyes and not to peek. He is then handed a small object which he will not immediately recognize. The point of the game is for him to "feel" that object with all senses except sight and to describe in detail his sensations. He should be prompted by the parent to focus his concentration on perceptual reactions which he has not articulated. He can be asked, "Is it smooth, bumpy, hot, cold, wet?" He can be asked to describe its texture, shape, smell, even taste. Then by piecing together these perceptual clues, he is to guess what the object is. If he guesses successfully, he becomes the questioner and the parent becomes the blindfolded guesser.

This game develops perceptions and vocabulary. It helps the child react deeply to his own sense responses and, indirectly, it helps him "take in" more of the world around him. From this basic game a hierarchy of other such exercises are built, all designed to increase perceptual skills and to act as a perceptual foundation for engaging in <u>as if</u>, since the vividness of pretending is related to the vividness of perceiving the real world. During this period, the <u>as if</u> pretending is rooted to real objects which may be used to represent other things. In a later stage, purely imaginary elements, (with no tangible representative objects) are added.

Among examples given is a wonderful game with many simple variations called "the magic ball." The parent at play time tells the child that they have just bought an invisible magic ball which by command can be changed to any shape and size imaginable. The ball will only change its weight, shape, and size when it is in the air being tossed from one person to another. After some very specific preliminary rules (discussed at length in the chapter) which focus the child's concentration upon "seeing" vividly this ball, parent and child toss the "ball" from one to another. When the "ball" is in the air, the parent calls out, "It's now a thirty-pound lead basketball," and the child must adjust his image of the ball accordingly and react spontaneously to the change. Then it is his turn to decide when and how to change the ball. This game not only delights

children of this age group but also helps to develop the as if potential considerably.

Chapter 3: Preparing for the Imaginary Conversation (Shared Imaginary Scenes).

A common, tangible environment is emphasized and participants react compatibly within this environment. In this stage (3-5 years approximately), no active demands are made on the participants except their reacting in some plausible manner to this common environment. They may be themselves or other characters. They may be and do anything they please. No properties or costumes are used. Developmentally, it is important to commence these exercises with a relatively concrete environment which could logically exist within the experiences of the participants (domestic scenes, traffic scenes, shopping, etc.). The task is to recreate this locale in another place. Thus, the living room or den becomes the supermarket or local playground in the spring or the skating rink in the winter with parent and children reacting within this imaginary locale. Once this task is mastered, more fantastic and/or remote locales may be chosen. Using this concept as a basis, a variety of specific games are suggested.

The games offered in this chapter begin with the classic "tug-of-war" and move to more complex imaginary environments. The "tug-of-war" consists of two teams of one or more on each side. Using an imaginary rope and specific directions (presented at length in the book), the teams attempt to pull one another into an imaginary ditch in the living room or playroom floor. The game is enhanced considerably by embellishments added during the playing. For example, one favorite device is for the parent to call out, "The rope is turning to bubble gum," at which point all participants must visualize the rope changing and they must react accordingly. Of course, endless variations of this embellishment may be added. The rope could change to ice cubes; the imaginary ditch could contain lions or snakes or even ice cream. From this relatively simple situation, the children begin to realize the potential for enjoyment inherent in these games of pretend. They also develop specific skills to enhance their natural instincts toward their own, spontaneous role playing. And they are prepared for more complex environmental games.

From games like "tug-of-war," the reader is led to construct his own which capitalize on environments which have been shared by parent and child. If, for example, the family has recently been to the zoo, techniques are explained to enable participants to recreate the experience successfully.

Chapter 4: The Imaginary Conversation (Shared Imaginary Characters and Conflicts).

From about the age of four years, social play becomes a major interest of most children. Performing in front and to some extent for others increasingly becomes central although this tendency is to be minimized in dramatic play and games. By age seven, elaborate, theatrical fantasies may be presented by children and adults if these grow naturally out of the improvising of the participants, rather than imposed upon them prior to the playing. This is a crucial, developmental period for, in a mild way,

it involves learning some of the technical skills of portraying a role with clarity of communication to others. Thus, for perhaps the first obvious time, the major focus is on what one is doing rather than on one's own importance within and without the game.

With the addition of simple character and conflict elements to the previously perfected common locale experiences, speech becomes important -- perhaps even more important than pantomime. Thus, for the first time, systematic dialogue ability begins to be emphasized. The participants are now functioning in a clearly structured fantasy environment with the emphasis on personifying personalities other than their own (at this age, these other "personalities" usually are broad stereotypes--the "old man," the "pirate"--but unique dimensions of character do occasionally occur and should be reinforced). The premises or situations which act as the initial impetus for the games are still evolved as a result of the environment and/or characters rather than prescribed prior to playing.

An example is offered below which typifies the "imaginary conversation" game. It is constructed upon a foundation established by previous exercises outlined in the earlier chapters. It provides loosely structured roles for parent and child and a conflict which must be somehow resolved. In the game, the environment established is a specific exterior locale familiar to the child, an area of a park, playground, or a street intersection, for instance. The first task is for the child to function as if he is within this environment. Then, the child is told that there is a wallet or purse on the ground and that he must react to this object within the environment. As the child does so, spontaneously the parent enters the "scene" as a policeman and begins asking certain questions. As the child responds, a small play begins to evolve. The parent-policeman is in a position to control the structure of the scene by programming various responses from the child until the episode is completed. Descriptions of how various children have actually responded to this game in the past are presented to acquaint the reader with possible outcomes. A variety of these games are presented with examples of notable variations for various family and school situations.

Chapter 5: Preparing for the Improvisational Games (Rules, Climaxes, and Roles).

In preparing for full story improvisational games, all previous elements perfected in former games and play are preserved cumulatively (objects, scene, character, plot). Visualizing simple as if objects are emphasized. Reacting to a collectively imagined locale is crucial. Characterization and spoken spontaneous dialogue are emphasized, and simple conflictual elements are added. Now, however, a new and advanced ingredient is emphasized. Simple plots containing a series of prescribed complications leading to a major climax are presented and parents and children function within this pattern. Role-switching is used. Outcomes may be predetermined or not. But a criterion of success is manifest in the following of the set structure agreed upon prior to the game. With these aspects as principles, a variety of game suggestions are presented. For instance, the same basic situation cited as an example of the "imaginary conversation" game could be adapted to the purposes set forth in this chapter in which case the following

dimensions to the "lost wallet" episode must be added:

1. Now, the child no longer plays himself in the situation but rather another character (which at this age usually emerges stereotypically: the old hobo in the park, the crook, the ball player, etc.). The child himself selects the character which would logically inhabit the environment at the appropriate time, but he now must portray someone other than himself.

2. A specific dramatic structure is preplanned in detail. Parent and child decide upon the sequence of events which must occur in the improvisation and try to adhere to these scenes. They discuss and plan why the character is in the environment, how he feels, how he notices the wallet, what he plans to do with it, when the policeman comes, what they talk about, what each finally does, how the play is resolved and other details. They then play the scene, discuss it afterward, switch roles and play it again.

3. The scene may be replayed many times, but each replay is a predetermined variation based upon suggestions for improvement agreed upon following the previous playing.

Chapter 6: The Improvisational Game.

The culmination of games and play programmed to develop the capacity for parent and child to share pleasant, imaginative experiences in drama games occurs with the complete improvisational game. This is not to say that previous exercises and games cannot be used at the pleasure of the participants. Indeed, any prior experiences which were especially pleasurable can be repeated. Further, if certain children or adults feel the necessity to "warm-up" with short games before the complete improvisational event, this is perfectly acceptable.

In the improvisational game, entirely structured stories can be used as the departure point. Participants play well-developed characters in the style of the original source (realistic, farcical, stylized, etc.). They function within their roles in a manner determined chiefly by the original literature.

Through free discussion, a scenario is created and divided into scenes. Characters are discussed but no formal dialogue is recorded. Parts are assigned for each scene, and the improvisation is begun. Using the locale, premise, and character information as guidelines, the participants create interactive dialogue as they progress through the scene, continuing until they decide that the scene is over. After each playing, the sequence is evaluated and suggestions for improvement are voiced. Frequently, the scene is replayed until the group wishes to proceed to the next episode.

There are many variations to this basic approach. The first episode can be replayed as many times as there are participants so that each member has an opportunity to play the sequence. Roles can be switched; new variations can be included; so that what was initially a simple and brief ex-

pository sequence could blossom into an intricate and complicated, lengthy act.

Many examples are offered. Specific ways of offering constructive criticism to promote a more pleasurable experience are suggested. Anecdotal descriptions of past experiences in handling these games are presented. Summaries of the dramatic and psychological factors implicit within the entire book are offered in the style of the major section of this report. Conclusions are given.

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